

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Division for Behavioral Health

*Bureau of Mental Health Services*



***Supported Employment Fidelity Assessment***

**for**

***Northern Human Services***

Conducted on September 27, 28 & 29, 2016

Final Report Issued November 14, 2016

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## I. ACRONYMS

ACT	Assertive Community Treatment
BMHS	Bureau of Mental Health Services
CMHA	Community Mental Health Agreement
CMHC	Community Mental Health Center
CSP	Community Support Program
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
EBP	Evidence Based Practice
IPS	Individual Placement and Support
LU	Low Service Utilization
ISP	Individual Service Plan
MH	Mental Health
NH	New Hampshire
NHH	New Hampshire Hospital
PSA	Peer Support Agency
PIP	Program Improvement Plan
QAI	Quality Assurance and Improvement
QI	Quality Improvement
QSR	Quality Service Review
SE	Supportive Employment
SMI	Severe Mental Illness
SPMI	Severe and Persistent Mental Illness
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation

## II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fidelity Team was pleased with the flexibility and cooperation exhibited from all levels of staff at Northern Human Services (Northern or NHS). Northern delivers Supported Employment at three sites Berlin, Conway and Littleton. BMHS staff decided, based on prior procedures and recognizing the impact on the center and general limited staff resources, to conduct site reviews in two locations, one selected by NHS and the second randomly selected from the remaining sites. The Fidelity assessment was more complicated than ones conducted at other Centers due to two sites being assessed. Nonetheless, the agency was able to provide all of the necessary assessment opportunities for both sites. The outcome of this review for the Berlin, with only one SE Specialist, site of Northern Human Service achieved a “Good Fidelity” rating with a score of 100 out of a possible 125 points. The Littleton, with two SE Specialists on staff, site achieved a “Good Fidelity” rating with a score of 107 out of a possible 125 points. Northern Human Services overall achieved a “Good Fidelity” with an Agency Average score of 103.5.

### **Highlights:**

**Agency Support:** Northern Human Services generally ensures that Supported Employment (SE) is a viable practice and offered to all consumers. The Executive Director has, in recent months, attended meetings to learn more about the day-to-day activities of SE specialists and the teamwork from the clinical staff. The Board of Directors has regular reports shared with them regarding SE services. Two of the most prominent examples of agency support are the copious displays of SE brochures throughout the two sites and the display of a SE board, complete with flashing lights to attract staff attention, on the wall near staff offices in the Littleton site.

**SE Staff Motivation:** The Review Team (Team) was impressed with SE Specialists’ commitment, motivation and overall enjoyment of their work to provide high quality employment services to their consumers. The SE staffs at both sites are dedicated and flexible to provide the individualized services that consumers may require in order to obtain the ultimate goal of successful employment.

**SE Leadership:** The SE Leaders understand the core concepts of Supported Employment and the steps necessary to ensure that SE is offered to all consumers. The Quality Improvement (QI) department and Clinical staff recently developed an EMR documentation “trigger” for use by direct service staff who are familiar with SE, to routinely screen and discuss SE with consumers, and make referrals as appropriate. This has already resulted in an increase in referrals to the program.

**SE Services:** The most important components of SE, the services themselves, are overall in alignment with high fidelity. The rural nature of their locations “above the Notch” pose some impediments to higher ratings for some items, but the efforts towards implementation of SE were

noted. There was a wide array of jobs held by consumers, and uniformly consumers expressed satisfaction and appreciation for the work of the SE Specialists. Individual attention and adaptations were noted throughout the Team's assessment opportunities.

**SE Services documentation integrated in a single EMR:** The SE service notes, the Individual Service Plan (ISP), the Vocational Profile and other team services documentation were all located in a single electronic medical record which is available to all treatment providers. The Team appreciated the relatively straight forward arrangement of information in the record including a separate tab for Evidenced Based Supported Employment (EBSE) service notes that was added apparently in the last year.

#### **Areas of focus (by Section (I, II, III, and Item 1,2,3,...):**

##### ***II 3. Collaboration between employment specialists and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors.***

Vocational Rehabilitation reported that the “flow” of information and referrals between the Center and VR used to be regular and felt very collaborative and that it is much less so at this present time. VR apparently perceives that the SE Specialists are “too busy” to follow up on some referrals from VR. SE Specialists will participate in ACRE (Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators) training with VR, but not until spring 2017; it is hoped that this will initiate a closer relationship between the two agencies.

***Recommendation:*** Aim for SE specialists and VR counselors to have scheduled face-to-face meetings at least monthly and have consumer-related contacts (phone, e-mails, in person) weekly to discuss shared consumers and referrals.

##### ***II 7. Agency focus on competitive employment:***

***Broaden support for SE among consumers.*** There are several mechanisms in place for staff and members of the community to learn about SE and hear positive success stories. The agency website has a description of SE and a “success” story. Opportunities for consumers, who may not frequent the agency website, or have access to agency newsletters, and/or minutes of meetings with the Board of Directors, are limited. The Agency promotes SE, but not in ways that are specific for consumers to share their experiences with SE. In Littleton there was a board with flashing white lights that was kept up to date by both SE Specialists with job openings, area job fairs, and employment services and tips.

***Recommendations:*** Aim to have agency support for consumers to share work stories with other consumers and staff (e.g., agency wide employment recognition events, in-service training, peer support groups, agency newsletter articles, invited speaker at consumer treatment groups, etc...) at least twice a year. The development of a display of the successes of SE, perhaps in the

waiting rooms of all programs, with consumer success stories would be one method to convey the benefits of the service. Another may be a periodic gathering of consumers to share their stories with newly referred consumers.

***Tracking and sharing of SE activities and outcomes.*** Overall SE tracking is not robust, nor are outcomes routinely shared with the SE Specialists. There was some tracking that had occurred prior to this SE Fidelity assessment. As mentioned above, a recently implemented EMR documentation “trigger” is being used by direct service staff to routinely screen, and discuss SE with consumers. This has generated several new referrals in the short time – about 4 weeks - it has been available. The number of consumers who obtained competitive employment over the past quarter, the number of new consumers referred to SE, the number of new employers, average length of competitive employment for consumers, are all possible examples of data to track and share.

***Recommendations:*** Aim to measure rates of competitive employment on at least a quarterly basis and share outcomes with agency leadership and staff. Continue with the prompts for internal referrals and track the outcomes of the referrals. Develop a mechanism to measure outcomes in addition to penetration. Examples of outcomes include: the number of consumers who obtained competitive jobs in the past six months, the number of consumers who have held onto jobs for a certain period of time, etc... Including SE specialists in the development of additional outcome measures and the routine sharing of results would be important information to share with all staff.

***Increase quality and completeness of SE service documentation.*** While the Team had few concerns that adequate fidelity Supported Employment services were being delivered, the thorough and complete documentation of services was not always apparent, or at times found to be inadequate. An example is that there is a separate section of the record for SE services, and the Vocational Profile is integrated with the record. The Profile was not consistently kept up to date. Improvement in documentation quality and completeness, relative to the important and specific work that the SE Specialists do in engaging and supporting a consumer, developing businesses, and working with families to ensure success for a consumer would accomplish this.

***Recommendation:*** Use documentation as part of staff training and supervision. Incorporating some of the tracking items previously suggested, such as job development and outcomes, may have the additional benefit of improved documentation.

### ***III 6. Job development-Frequent employer contact.***

***Recommendation:*** Aim for SE Specialists to make 6 or more face-to-face contacts per week that are consumer specific, or 2 employer contacts times the number of people looking for work when there are less than 3 people looking for work on a their caseload. In addition, SE Specialists use a tracking form that is reviewed by the SE supervisor on a weekly basis.

### ***III 10. Competitive jobs.***

***Phasing out (or spinning off) the consumer run businesses.*** The agency continues to operate consumer run businesses at both sites. These businesses apparently offer at least minimum wages but are reserved for MHC consumers only, and so are not properly considered to meet SE Fidelity standards for Competitive Employment. It is clear that staff is aware of and continue to refer consumers to these business. Staff report that these businesses allow consumers to gain work readiness experience, provide an opportunity to obtain references for competitive employment, and allows acute psychiatric illness symptoms to decrease over time due to working with other consumes and staff who are knowledgeable about mental illness. This may indeed be true for some consumers, and there may be very compelling reasons to maintain consumer businesses in rural and isolated settings with a short supply of employers and significant transportation challenges. Evidenced Based Supported Employment does not support the use of these types of work experiences.

***Recommendation:*** In order for all of the benefits of SE to be realized, the evidence is that fidelity to the model is critical, and the consumer businesses appear to impede progress toward that goal. A trial period in a consumer run business to reduce anxiety does not mirror the SE model and can possibly be holding consumers back from reaching their full potential. Continue with the phasing out of the businesses and pursue high fidelity Supported Employment with consumers who are interested in working.

### ***III 14. Assertive engagement and outreach by integrated treatment team.***

There were some aspects of SE services that the Team believes occurs based on interviews, such as frequent reengagement contacts after a consumer no-shows an appointment, but lacking the documentation, the “credit” could not be given.

***Recommendation:*** Aim to increase the following: systematic documentation of outreach attempts; engagement and outreach attempts made by integrated team members; multiple home/community visits; coordinated visits by SE specialists with integrated team member and connect with family when applicable.

## **III. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

This report describes Individual Placement and Support/Supported Employment (IPS/SE) services at Northern Human Services’ Berlin and Littleton sites. This report addresses each site separately and provides a combined average score to the agency. The fidelity review is considered an integral component to complement and validate self-fidelity measures and is intended to promote and assure fidelity to the Dartmouth Individual Placement and

Support/Supported Employment (IPS/SE) model and compliance with the Community Mental Health Agreement (CMHA).

#### IV. REVIEW SCOPE AND PROCESS (METHODOLOGY)

The SE Fidelity Review Team (Team) conducted an on-site IPS/SE Fidelity Review on September 27, 2016 in the Berlin site. The Team conducted a review at the Littleton site on September 28, 2016 (which also included chart reviews of the Berlin consumers) and September 29, 2016. The Team members were:

1. Karl Boisvert – Administrator of Community Mental Health Services, BMHS
2. Elizabeth Fenner-Lukaitis – Director of Acute Care, Bureau of Mental Health Services (BMHS)
3. Thomas Grinley – Office of Consumer and Family Affairs, BMHS

The Berlin review consisted of:

- An agency orientation with the Team, NHS QI Director, and the Regional Mental Health Administrator which covered the entire Center.
- Observation of the Community Support Program (CSP) team meeting
- Interviews with the CEO, the QI department, and Berlin CSP Directors.
- Interview with the SE Leader
- Interview with the SE Specialist
- Field observation of follow-along support
- Interviews with consumers
- Observation of SE Supervision
- Field observation of job development.

The Littleton review consisted of:

- Interview with the site CSP Director who is also the Supported Employment Supervisor.
- Observation of the CSP team meeting.
- Observation of SE Supervision.
- Observation of Job Development with a SE Specialist.
- Interviews with SE Specialists.
- A phone interview with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff.
- Electronic Medical Record reviews of Berlin and Littleton consumers.
- Interviews with SE consumers
- Field observation of follow-along supports for a consumer and his employer.
- Exit interview with staff.

The Supported Employment Fidelity Scale was completed following each site visit independently by each member of the SE Fidelity Review Team. A subsequent meeting was held to develop consensus scoring results. The scale is divided into three sections: I. Staffing, II. Organization, and III. Services. Each section has several fidelity items with each item rated on a



5-point Likert scale format ranging from 1= no implementation to 5= full implementation with intermediate numbers representing progressively greater degrees of implementation. Agencies that fully implement IPS Supported Employment according to the scale criteria have shown to have higher competitive employment rates than those that do not. High fidelity Supported Employment has demonstrated general improvement and better outcomes on other important measures of mental health, stability and overall functioning.

## V. AGENCY OVERVIEW

Northern Human Services provides professional support and services to people affected by mental illness, developmental disabilities, substance abuse, acquired brain injury or related disorders. The organization serves residents of Coos, Carroll and Grafton counties of New Hampshire, and has facilities in Colebrook, Littleton, Berlin, Conway and Wolfeboro.

Northern Human Services' Community Support Program is responsible for the treatment of adults aged 18 and older with serious and persistent mental illness and who require a range of intensive community-based services that include Assessment/Evaluation, Outpatient Therapy, Substance Abuse treatment, Emergency Services, Psychiatric Services, Victims' Assistance, Targeted Case Management, Functional Support Services, Referral, Consultation and Education, Illness Management and Recover, Assertive Community Treatment, Residential Services, Financial Case Management, and Supported Employment.

## VI. REVIEW FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS / REQUIREMENTS

### I. Staffing:

1. Caseload size: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 4.5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 4 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin the reports and interviews support the SE Specialist's caseload was less than 20 consumers.

In Littleton the reports and interviews support that Employment Specialists' caseloads range between 21-25 consumers.

2. Employment services staff: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 4.5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 4 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin the records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that the SE Specialist provides employment services 96% of more of the time.

In Littleton the records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that Employment Specialists provide employment-related services at least 90-95% of the time. While the majority of the work done by the non-ACT SE Specialist is indeed related to vocational endeavors, there were some examples given where other services were performed. The ACT SE Specialist provides other services in addition to SE, in a manner consistent with ACT fidelity, but inconsistent with high fidelity SE services.

3. Vocational generalists:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers as well as observations revealed that Employment Specialists carry out all six phases of employment services (e.g., program intake, engagement, assessment, job development/placement, job coaching and follow-along supports).

## **II. Organization:**

1. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment thru team assignment:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that Employment Specialists are attached to one or two mental health treatment teams, from which at least 90-100% of the Employment Specialists caseload is comprised.

2. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health treatment thru frequent team member contact:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the records reviewed, interviews with staff, supervisors, as well as observations, revealed that all five key components are present: 1) Employment Specialists attend weekly mental health treatment team meetings; 2) Employment Specialists participate in treatment team meetings with shared decision-making; 3) Employment services documentation (i.e., vocational assessment/profile, employment plan, progress notes) is integrated into a consumer's mental health treatment record; 4) Employment Specialists' offices are in close proximity to (or shared with) their mental health treatment team members; and 5) Employment Specialists help the team think about employment for people who have not yet been referred to Supported Employment services.

3. Collaboration between Employment Specialists and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselors: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE = 2.5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 3 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 2 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin the interviews with staff and supervisors revealed that Employment Specialists and VR counselors have consumer-related contacts (phone, e-mail, and in-person) monthly to discuss shared consumers and referrals.

In Littleton the interviews with staff and supervisors revealed that Employment Specialists and VR counselors have consumer-related contacts (phone, e-mail, and in-person) at least quarterly to discuss shared consumers and referrals.

4. Vocational unit: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE = 4.5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 4 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin the program is in a rural area where the single SE Specialist is geographically separated from other SE colleagues. The SE Specialist meets 2-3 times per month (4 in Berlin) with her supervisor in person and team members and mental health practitioners are available to help the SE Specialist with activities such as taking someone to work or picking up job applications. In Littleton the interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations, revealed that there are at least 2 full-time Employment Specialists and a team leader that form an employment unit with weekly consumer-based group supervision based on the Supported Employment model in which strategies are identified and job leads are shared. They provide coverage for each other's caseloads when needed. Consumers reported working with different Employment Specialists when their "assigned" one is on vacation. The Fidelity Team observed discussions about job leads for each other.

SE Specialists meet monthly at a rotating different site to have face to face contact and share strategies, successes, and participate in brainstorming.

5. Role of employment supervisor: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE = 4</b>	<b>BERLIN = 4 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 4 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that the following three key roles of the employment supervisor are present. The Team observed the following: 1) One full-time equivalent (FTE) supervisor is responsible for no more than 10 Employment Specialists. The SE Leader does not have other supervisory responsibilities (Program leaders supervising fewer than ten Employment Specialists may spend a percentage of time on other supervisory activities on a pro-rated basis. For

example, a SE Leader responsible for 2 Employment Specialists may be devoted to SE Supervision half time); 2) The SE Leader conducts weekly Supported Employment supervision designed to review consumer situations and identify new strategies and ideas to help consumers in their work lives; 3) The SE Leader communicates with mental health treatment team leaders to ensure that services are integrated, to problem-solve programmatic issues (such as referral process, or transfer of follow-along supports to mental health workers) and to be a champion for the value of work. The SE Leader also attends a meeting for each mental health treatment team on a weekly basis.

In Berlin the SE Leader accompanies the SE Specialist in the field monthly to improve skills by observing, modeling, and giving feedback on skills, e.g., meeting employers for job development, but the Team did not find that “The SE Leader reviews current consumer outcomes (Penetration rates) with Employment Specialists and sets goals to improve program performance at least quarterly”.

In Littleton the SE Leader reviews current consumer outcomes (Penetration rates) with Employment Specialists and sets goals to improve program performance at least quarterly, however the Team did not find that “The SE Leader accompanies Employment Specialists, who are new or having difficulty with job development, in the field monthly to improve skills by observing, modeling, and giving feedback on skills, e.g. meeting employers for job development”. The Littleton SE Specialist and the ACT SE Specialist are both relatively new to their positions – approximately 6 weeks at the time of the assessment - and have had field observation once in that period.

<p>6. Zero exclusion criteria:</p> <p><b>AGENCY AVERAGE = 4.5</b></p>	<p><b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b></p> <p><b>LITTLETON = 4 out of 5</b></p>
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In Berlin the interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that all consumers interested in working have access to SE services. Mental health practitioners encourage consumers to consider employment, and referrals for SE are solicited by many sources. The SE Specialist offers help to find another job when one has ended, regardless of the reason that the job ended or number of jobs held. The SE Specialist has begun to co-locate with Intake Clinicians in another building to ensure a broader variety of timely referrals.

In Littleton the interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that there was no evidence of exclusion, formal or informal. Referrals are not solicited by a wide variety of sources. Employment Specialists offer help to find another job when one has ended, regardless of the reason that the job ended or number of jobs held. Referrals appeared to be solicited by team only and not by a wide variety of sources. The presence of the consumer-run business, Clean and Green, was noted for this item. There were comments made about using

Clean and Green to help a consumer manage anxiety, to obtain references, or to “get used” to working within the comfort of being with other individuals with mental illness and staff who were likewise familiar with mental illness. High Fidelity, Evidence-Based Supported Employment would work with an anxious consumer by having him/her start out with small steps, perhaps just walking by the potential employment site and then leading up to going inside for a short period of time. The Team does not dispute that Clean and Green has been beneficial for some consumers, but the presence of a consumer-run business is not part of the Supported Employment model.

7. Agency focus on competitive employment:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE = 3</b>	<b>BERLIN = 3 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 3 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the reviews of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, as well as observations revealed that the Agency promotes competitive work through three of five strategies. The Team found that: 1) while not consistent in every chart reviewed, the Agency Intake does include questions about the consumer’s interest in employment. It was relatively new at the time of the assessment, but following Intake, contact is made by SE Specialists to discuss employment options; 2) the Agency includes questions about interest in employment on all annual (or semiannual ) assessment or treatment plan reviews. This was observed at the time of the assessment and will be more robust for future assessments as the “trigger” mechanism previously described has been implemented; 3) The agency displays written posting (e.g., bulletin boards, posters) about working and Supported Employment services, in the lobby or other waiting areas.

In both Berlin and Littleton the two fidelity areas the Team did not find support for were: 1) “The Agency supports ways for consumers to share work stories with other consumers and staff (e.g., agency-wide employment recognition events, in-service training, peer support groups, agency newsletter articles, invited speakers at consumer treatment groups, etc...) at least twice a year”; 2) “Agency measures rate of competitive employment on at least a quarterly basis and shares outcome with agency leadership and staff”.

8. Executive support for Supported Employment:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 4</b>	<b>BERLIN = 4 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 4 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the interviews with supervisors as well as observations revealed that four key components of executive team support are present, the Team found: 1) Executive Director and Clinical Director demonstrates knowledge regarding the principles of evidence-based Supported Employment; 2) Agency QI process includes an explicit review of the SE program, or components of the program, at least every 6 months through the use of the

Supported Employment Fidelity scale or until achieving high fidelity, and at least yearly thereafter. Agency QI process uses the results of the fidelity assessment to improve SE implementation and sustainability; 3) SE Leader shares information about Evidence Based Practices (EBP) barriers and facilitators with the Executive team (including the Executive Director) at least twice each year. The executive team help the SE Leader identify and implement solution to barriers; 4) The Agency CEO/Executive Director communicates how SE services support the mission of the agency and articulates clear and specific goals for SE and/or complete employment to all agency staff during the first six months and at least annually (e.g. SE kickoff, all-agency meetings, agency newsletters, etc...). This item is not delegated to another administrator. The most recent NHS Annual report included a section about the necessity of providing SE Services to enhance consumers' lives, along with a "success" story of one of their consumers.

In both Berlin and Littleton the Team found the following fidelity component was missing: 1) at least one member of the Executive team actively participates at SE leadership team meetings (steering committee meeting) that occur at least every six months for high fidelity programs and at least quarterly for programs that have not yet achieved high fidelity. Steering committee is defined as a diverse group of stakeholders charged with reviewing fidelity, program implementation and the service delivery system. Committee develops written action plans aimed at developing or sustaining high fidelity services.

### III. Services:

1. Work incentives planning:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the reviews of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed the work incentives planning process where Employment Specialists, or other Mental Health (MH) practitioners, offer consumers assistance in obtaining comprehensive, individualized work incentives planning by a specially trained work incentive planner prior to starting a job. They also facilitate access to work incentive planning when consumers need to make decisions about changes in work hours and pay. Consumers are provided information and assistance about reporting earnings to Social Security Administration, housing programs, etc... depending on the person's benefits. The agency has made a concerted effort to ensure that consumers are fully educated about their incentives by having a case manager available to all consumers, not just those enrolled in SE. There are times that a referral to VR occurs for some of the more complicated cases. The team heard discussions about different consumers and the impact work had on their food stamps and other sources of income and how that was addressed.

2. Disclosure:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, and observations revealed that all four components regarding disclosure are present. Employment Specialists do not require all consumers to disclose their psychiatric disability at the work site in order to receive services. Employment Specialists offer to discuss with consumers the possible costs and benefits (pros and cons) of disclosure at the work site in advance of consumers disclosing at the work site. Employment Specialists describe how disclosure related to requesting accommodations and the employment specialist's role in communicating with the employer. Employment Specialists discuss specific information to be disclosed (e.g. disclose receiving mental health treatment or presence of a psychiatric disability, or difficulty with anxiety or unemployed for a period of time, etc...) and offers examples of what could be said to employers. Employment Specialists discuss disclosure on more than one occasion (e.g. if consumers have not found employment after two months or if consumers reports difficulty on the job). The Team heard consumers report their preferences at both ends of the spectrum; some disclosed immediately and others did not want to disclose.

3. Ongoing work-based vocational assessment:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 4</b>	<b>BERLIN = 4 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 4 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that the initial vocational assessment occurs over 2-3 sessions in which interests and strengths are explored. Employment Specialists help consumers learn from each job experience and also work with the treatment team to analyze job loss, job problems, and job successes. They do not document these lessons learned in the vocational profile, OR the vocational profile is not updated on a regular basis. Many of the records did not adequately convey the analysis of why jobs were lost or otherwise not a good fit; one note may indicate a job was lost and the next note indicates there was a new job, but no descriptions as to why the old job was no longer in place and how the new job came into being. Documentation regarding job tailoring was weak in this aspect.

4. Rapid job search for competitive job:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 4</b>	<b>BERLIN = 4 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 4 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations resulted in learning that the first face-to-face contact with an employer by the



consumer or the Employment Specialist about a competitive job is on average between 31-60 days (1-2 mos) after program entry. There were some records with very strong support for contact much sooner than the 31 day mark, but the agency doesn't track employer contacts and therefore could not earn a rating of a 5.

5. Individualized job search: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists make employer contacts based on job choices which reflect consumers' preferences; strengths, symptoms, lessons learned from previous jobs, etc.... 90-100% of the time rather than the job market and are consistent with the current employment/job search plan. When consumers have limited work experience, employment specialists provide information about a range of job options in the community.

6. Job development-Frequent employer contact: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 2.5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 2 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 3 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin a review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers as well as observations revealed that the SE Specialist makes 2 face-to-face employer contacts per week that are consumer-specific.

In Littleton a review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers as well as observations revealed that each Employment Specialist makes 4 face-to-face employer contacts per week that are consumer-specific, and use a tracking form that is reviewed by the SE supervisor on a monthly basis.

7. Job Development-Quality of employer contact: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists build relationships with employers through multiple visits in person that are planned to learn the needs of the employer, convey what the SE program offers to the employer, and describe consumer strengths that are a good match for the employer. Berlin is fortunate to have a SE Specialist that has a number of community contacts through a variety of connections. Littleton is fortunate to have a SE Specialist that had worked in the community with her own business and had maintained a



number of contacts. The Team observed a concerted effort displayed to learn about the needs of one employer and how best to work with them to find consumers who would fit their needs.

8. Diversity of job types:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 4</b>	<b>BERLIN = 3 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin a review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, and observations revealed that the SE Specialist assists consumers to obtain different types of jobs 60-69% of the time. There were 6 jobs that qualified for the assessment (not volunteer or consumer business-based); two had the same title of “housekeeper”.

In Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers, and observations revealed that Employment Specialists assist consumers obtain different types of jobs 85-100% of the time. There were 11 consumers employed at the time of the visit working in jobs ranging from store clerk to care attendant to food prep. Two consumers were working as “care attendants”, but all the others had different job titles.

9. Diversity of employers:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 4</b>	<b>BERLIN = 3 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that the SE Specialist assists consumers obtain jobs with different employers 60-69% of the time. There were 4 different employers for the 6 consumer jobs.

In Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists assist consumers obtain jobs with different employers 85-100% of the time. There were 10 different employers for the 11 employed consumers. One employer was listed two times (which is “allowed” in the scoring).

10. Competitive jobs:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 3</b>	<b>BERLIN = 1 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin there were fewer than 10 current jobs to assess; so a higher rating cannot be made.

In Littleton a review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that 95% or more competitive jobs held by consumers are permanent. All of the jobs paid at least minimum wage. All of the jobs were permanent (not temporary or time-limited) and

were jobs that were open to anyone to apply for-not set aside for individuals with disabilities. The consumers who worked for *Clean and Green* were not “counted” as part of the SE Fidelity.

11. Individualized follow-along supports:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton a review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that consumers receive different types of support for working that are based on the job, consumer preferences, work history, needs, and so forth. Employment Specialists also provide employer support (e.g. education information, job accommodations) at consumers’ request. The Employment Specialist helps people move onto more preferable jobs and also help people with school or certified training programs. The site provides examples of different types of support including enhancing supports by treatment team members.

In Berlin the Team observed the SE Specialist pick up a consumer in order to visit with the consumer’s employer of several months to support the consumer’s stability in the setting. The employer was very enthusiastic about SE and grateful to have a successful employee as well as appreciative of the SE Specialist’s involvement. In Littleton, the Team observed an SE Specialist work with a consumer to manage his delusions while also providing support and education for the employer. The employer was able to report observations of possible side-effects of a new medication to the SE Specialist before the rest of the treatment team observed them.

12. Time-unlimited follow-along supports:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 5 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton our review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists have face-to-face contact within 1 week before starting a job, within 3 days after starting a job, weekly for the first month, as at least monthly for a year or more, on average, after working steadily and desired by consumers. The Team heard directly from consumers, and read in the EMR, of a range of services for consumers regarding the frequency and duration of supports. In Littleton one consumer had been working for over a year and still had weekly follow-along supports in Littleton

13. Community-based services:  <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 4.5</b>	<b>BERLIN = 4 out of 5</b>  <b>LITTLETON = 5 out of 5</b>
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In Berlin the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists spend 50-64% of total scheduled work hours in the community. A random day was reviewed with the SE Specialist, along with a self-assessment, in addition to the aforementioned sources to assess the amount of time spent in the community to arrive at this rating.

In Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that Employment Specialists spend 65% or more of total scheduled work hours in the community. Employment Specialists were asked by the Team to share a random day. Some times in the office were due to SE Specialists and/or consumers needing to use the agency computers. The CEO agreed to purchase laptops for them so that they will be able to help consumers access job leads online in the community and also allow them to do their work in the community should they have a consumer not show up for a meeting. Service note location codes likewise reflected community based work as well.

14. Assertive engagement and outreach by integrated treatment team: <b>AGENCY AVERAGE SCORE = 1</b>	<b>BERLIN = 1 out of 5</b> <b>LITTLETON = 1 out of 5</b>
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In both Berlin and Littleton the review of records, interviews with staff, supervisors, consumers and observations revealed that two or less strategies for engagement and outreach are used. Once it is clear that the consumer no longer wants to work or continue SE services, the treatment team stops outreach. The Review Team found evidence that: 1) service termination is not based on missed appointments or fixed time limits. However the areas not found were: 1) Systematic documentation of outreach attempts - in Littleton one reviewer had no evidence of “systematic documentation of outreach attempts”, while the other two had limited examples; 2) Engagement and outreach attempts made by integrated team members; 3) Multiple home/community visits; 4) Coordinated visits by employment specialists with integrated team members; and 5) Connect with family, when applicable.

#### **IPS SE Fidelity Scale Results:**

- **Berlin: TOTAL Score = 100 Good Fidelity**
- **Littleton: TOTAL Score = 107 Good Fidelity**
- **Agency Average: TOTAL Score = 103.5 Good Fidelity**

## **VII. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

Northern Human Services (NHS) “Agency Average” score of 103.5 and the “Good Fidelity” result is admirable considering the unique challenges that NHS faces as the most rural and

geographically spread-out CMHC in New Hampshire. Transportation is an especially noteworthy challenge for NHS staff and consumers - the Team heard of one consumer who walked a total of 24 miles in one day for his employment. The nature of rural small towns with limited employment options and the specialized seasonal nature of some segments of the regional economy results in significant challenges to gaining permanent competitive employment for consumers. In many towns the idea that “everyone knows everyone” is perceived as a barrier to hiring a consumer who may have a history of problematic employment experiences. We are confident that NHS has the experience to successfully navigate these barriers and the leadership and staff committed to continuing to shape its’ Supported Employment service towards full fidelity to the benefit of the consumers in that region.

There are several areas of focus that are important and the BMHS will use these as a basis for technical assistance and monitoring efforts going forward. We recommend that NHS develop and submit an action plan that addresses the specific goals and measurable objectives that can be implemented toward better fidelity overall and prioritize those sites and fidelity items where scores have declined or are 3 or below. We look forward to your response within two weeks of receipt of this final report.

## VIII. FIDELITY REVIEW TRENDS:

### Comparing the 2015 and 2016 Supported Employment Fidelity reports

Northern Human Services (NHS) did a self-fidelity Review in Sept and October 2015 dated 10/15/15. That report aggregated the data from three sites, Berlin, Conway and Littleton to produce a whole number composite agency score. The current Bureau of Mental Health Services (BMHS) review examined only two of the three sites, but provided scores for each site independently and computed an agency average score by item and overall.

The BMHS 2016 report had average score of 103.5 which is 6.5 points lower than the NHS report from 2015 with a score of 110.

Compared to the 2015 the BMHS 2016 review noted improvement for:

#### Section I – Staffing:

1. Case load size - Berlin.
2. Employment Services staff - Berlin.

#### Section II – Organization:

4. Vocational unit – Both Berlin and Littleton
5. Role of employment supervisor – Berlin and Littleton
8. Executive team support for SE – Berlin and Littleton

Compared to the 2015 the 2016 review noted lower average scores for:

Section II – Organization:

3. Collaboration between employment specialists and Vocational Rehab - Berlin and Littleton.
6. Zero exclusion criteria – Littleton

Section III - Services:

6. Job development-frequent employer contact – Berlin and Littleton.
8. Diversity of job types - Berlin.
9. Diversity of employers - Berlin.
10. Competitive jobs - Berlin.
13. Community based services - Berlin.
14. Assertive engagement and outreach by integrated treatment team. - Berlin and Littleton.

The following table (TABLE 1) compares the overall 2015 NHS Self-Fidelity rating with the 2016 BMHS Fidelity assessment scores.

TABLE 1.

<b>I. STAFFING</b>	2015 Self Fidelity	2016 Average	2016 Berlin	2016 Littleton
1. Caseload size Score:	4	4.5	5	4
2. Employment services staff	4	4.5	5	4
3. Vocational generalists	5	5	5	5
<b>II. Organization</b>				
1. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health thru team assignment	5	5	5	5
2. Integration of rehabilitation with mental health thru frequent team member contact	5	5	5	5
3. Collaboration between employment specialists and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors	4	2.5	3	2
4. Vocational unit	3	4.5	4	5
5. Role of employment supervisor	3	4	4	4
6. Zero exclusion criteria	5	4.5	5	4
7. Agency focus on competitive employment	3	3	3	3
8. Executive team support for SE	3	4	4	4
<b>III. Services</b>				
1. Work incentives planning	5	5	5	5
2. Disclosure Score:	5	5	5	5
3. Ongoing, work-based vocational assessment	4	4	4	4
4. Rapid search for competitive job	4	4	4	4
5. Individualized job search	5	5	5	5
6. Job development—Frequent employer contact	4	2.5	2	3
7. Job development—Quality of employer contact	5	5	5	5
8. Diversity of job types	5	4	3	5
9. Diversity of employers	5	4	3	5
10. Competitive jobs	5	3	1	5
11. Individualized follow-along supports	5	5	5	5
12. Time-unlimited follow-along supports	5	5	5	5
13. Community-based services	5	4.5	4	5
14. Assertive engagement and outreach by integrated treatment team	4	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>103.5</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>107</b>

12/5/2016

**Corrective Action Domain:** Collaboration between employment specialists and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors

**Problem:** Relationship between Vocational Rehabilitation and NHS Supported Employment Specialists is not as well established as it has been in the past

**Goal:** Increase communication and collaboration between NHS Supported Employment programs and Vocational Rehabilitation.

Outcome	Plan	Target Date
Increased flow of communication and referrals between VR and SEP programs.	1. Supported Employment specialists will meet with, and document, a meeting with VR (face to face) at least quarterly.	Initial face to face Quarterly meetings will take place by 3/1/17
	2. Littleton Supported Employment Specialists will be registered to attend the next offered ACRES training.	Next ACRES Training anticipated for Spring 2017

**Corrective Action Domain : Zero Exclusion**

**Problem:** Utilizing a consumer run business as a stepping stone towards competitive employment does not fit an EBSE High Fidelity model.

**Goal:** All Clients interested in working have access to supported employment services regardless of job readiness factors, substance abuse, symptoms, history of violent behaviors, cognition impairments, treatment non-adherence and personal presentation.

Outcome	Plan	Target Date
Supported Employment Specialists will provide the full array of EBSE services and will not seek to place individuals in a consumer run business	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supported Employment Specialists will do a presentation to Clean and Green vocational employees on Supported Employment, on a quarterly basis.</li> <li>Littleton Supported Employment Specialists will stay focused on not making referrals from Supported Employment to Clean and Green.</li> </ol>	Beginning 12/1/16 ; then ongoing

<b>Corrective Action Domain</b> : Job Development-Frequent Employer Contacts		
<b>Problem:</b> Frequency of employer contacts inconsistent with high fidelity model and there are inadequate means of tracking Job development activity.		
Goal: Establish a means for effectively documenting and tracking Job development activities.		
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Increase weekly employer contacts and monitor job development activities as part of weekly supervision.	1. Supported Employment Specialists will bring their job development logs into weekly supervision with their supervisor.  2. Supported Employment Specialists will build job development into their weekly schedule and, utilizing our electronic medical record, they will use the memo code "job development" in the scheduler to track their time.	1/1/2017; then ongoing

**Corrective Action Domain:** Diversity of Job Types and Diversity of Employers

**Problem:** The Berlin SEP site demonstrated a decline in it's

Goal: Increase Diversity of job types and of Employers.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
Berlin site will increase the diversity of it's job types and employers to 85-100% of the time.	Berlin will increase face to face job development contacts to 5 per week in order to facilitate more diversity among jobs.	10/1/2017

**Corrective Action Domain:** Competitive Jobs

**Problem:** Berlin had fewer than 10 individuals employed in competitive work and therefore received a 1 score for the Competitive Employment Domain

Goal: Increase number of competitively employed individuals to at least 10 individuals.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
A minimum of 10 individuals involved in the Berlin SEP program will be employed.	Increase caseload through Supported Employment engagement techniques which will increase individuals working in the Berlin area.	10/1/2017

**Corrective Action Domain:** Community Based Services

**Problem:** The Berlin SEP site demonstrated a decline in the percentage of time spend in the community.

Goal: Increase percentage of community based services to 65% or greater for all NHS SEP specialists.

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Plan</b>	<b>Target Date</b>
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NHS Supported Employment Specialists will spend a minimum of 65% of their work week in community based settings.	Supported employment Specialists will utilize the new lap tops in the community to increase their community based time.	Beginning 2/1/2017; then ongoing
<b>Corrective Action Domain:</b> Assertive Engagement and outreach by integrated treatment team.		
<b>Problem:</b> Lack of documented evidence of for assertive engagement attempts.		
Goal: Establish routine documentation of engagement techniques.		
Outcome	Plan	Target Date
<p>Clinical documentation will support that at minimum 4 of the following assertive engagement strategies were utilized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Service termination is not based on missed appointments or fixed time limits;</li> <li>ii) Systematic documentation of outreach attempts;</li> <li>iii) Engagement and outreach attempts made by integrated team members;</li> <li>iv) Multiple home/community visits;</li> <li>v) coordinated visits by employment specialist with integrated team member;</li> <li>vi) connect with family when applicable</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After an individual misses 2-4 appointments the Supported Employment Specialists will call a team meeting of all integrated team members.</li> <li>2. Supported Employment Specialists, and other treatment team members, will provide a minimum of 5 outreach attempts to an individual, being sure to document to the strategy used, prior to terminating services.</li> <li>3. Upon discharge from the SEP program a termination contact note will be completed explaining reason for discharge and summarizing attempts to re-engage client.</li> </ol>	Beginning 1/1/2017; then ongoing